

////////////////////ANIME STUFF 6

"Reviews and Information for the Anime Gourmet!"

3/1/1988

This is the 6th in a series of files of comments and reviews of anime (Japanese animation) items that we have bought. Please direct all comments to us by E-mail or post us a message in the Forum. We also welcome any reviews or comments about anime products or services that you would like to have included in the next anime stuff article. Also please send us any comments about any incorrect information contained here. A correction will be placed in the next ANIME STUFF.

- Tom Mitchell (TM)
CompuServe Address : 75156,1067
- Masaki Takai (MT)
CompuServe Address : 75106,3257
- Mike & Janet Naylor (M&J)
CompuServe Address : 76074,1631

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Masa and I would like to welcome Mike & Janet Naylor to ANIME STUFF!
Thanks for the help!

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SOME NOTES ON THE FUTURE OF HOME VIDEO AND ANIME COLLECTING:

There have been a lot of interesting developments in the world of consumer electronics over the past year. Since all US anime collectors are dependent on home video technologies for the distribution and presentation of anime, all of the new technologies that are emerging now will have a great effect on the future of our anime hobby.

The following are some of my observations on how some of these new technologies will effect us in the near future:

> Super-VHS: Question: Will we see any anime software issued in the new S-VHS format? A: Probably not for a while yet. Of course S-VHS represents a fantastic advantage over most home video systems in terms of picture resolution. But until the number of units in use gets close to the 1 Million mark...there won't be any profit in companies issuing software in this format.

Once that happens though, it will be interesting to see if anime films will be released in S-VHS. After all, unless costs drop quite a bit, S-VHS will remain too expensive for most of anime's target market to afford.

I do see S-VHS becoming popular for dubbing/pirating of anime due to the high resolution of the format. After all, with S-VHS it would become possible to do multiple copies of VHS software little loss of picture quality...(just wait to see how many companies can afford to release

Original Anime Videos once all-digital video recording is introduced ...perfect copies...A pirate's dream).

> COMPACT DISC VIDEO: I think that this format will work out very well for anime collectors in Japan. After all, CDV represents one of the

first video formats aimed at teens and young adults...anime's primary market. With CDV, you could sample 5 minutes of animation set to music from a favorite show, along with 20 minutes of digital BGM. All on a 5 inch compact disc. What a great souvenir to remember a favorite show with! And cheap too...high resolution video and digital sound on a little disc for only about 2000-2400 Yen (Say around \$20-\$30 US)

For us fans who must import videos in order to see anime, this might make an inexpensive way to sample the animation and music from shows that one might not have otherwise seen because of the high cost to buy a full blown video tape or laser disc of the show.

It will be interesting to see what kind of anime products are developed for CDV. And who knows? You might see some short OAV's created just for CDV!

>Super-Laser Vision: Of course, with over 400 lines of resolution, digital sound, low software cost, and software that doesn't wear out from repeated playings, Laserdisc has always been an ideal video system for the anime collector. Now many of the players offer the capability of playing CD's and now CDVs as well. An anime fan can now watch a favorite film and listen to the BGM all on the same machine! (grin) So, what's next? Super-LaserVision!

With the development of S-VHS and S-Video monitors, the LaserVision

folks

are now working on upgrading laser disc to keep it in the lead as the #1 system for delivering the best in both picture and sound quality. As far as hardware goes, Super-Laservision will just be an S-Video compatible version of current laserdisc technology.

The new S-Video hardware standard splits a video signal into two main parts: Picture detail information, and color information. The result is a much cleaner video signal boasting higher resolution pictures. On an S-Video compatible monitor, Super-VHS delivers a sharp 450 lines of resolution using special tape that is not compatible with standard VHS machines.

Now get this: Current laserdisc player technology using S-Video connector output on an S-Video monitor can deliver a picture slightly more than 600 lines! And that using current software! No special discs will have to be manufactured to take advantage of the new Super-LaserDisc players! (By the way, S-LV players will shown at upcoming Consumer Electronics shows. So you should be seeing them introduced in the next few months.)

This means your super-clear copy of NAUSICAA on laserdisc will look even better on a SuperLaser player...and you won't have to wait for a new S-Video version of the film to be issued to take advantage of the higher resolution.

With laserdiscs getting more popular through the consumer acceptance of the Compact Disc format, the LaserDisc will probably continue to grow as the preferred anime film collector's medium. Now just wait until LaserDiscs start recording...(That is about 2-4 years off...) Drool!

>HDTV: Over the next 10 years, we begin to see our aging NTSC television system replaced by one of several new high-definition broadcast systems to bring TV into the 21st century. (For an excellent summary of the technology and the types of High Definition TV systems being developed, see the February 1988 issue of VIDEO MAGAZINE...By the way,our current TV system was designed around a standard proposed in the late 1930's ...yuck!).

The benefits of some of the new proposed television systems will be

awesome: wide screen aspect ratio just like in movie theatres, and ultra-sharp pictures rivaling the resolution of 35mm film! Not to mention digital sound.

Despite which system is chosen, there is a danger for us anime fans that nobody has yet thought of: Compatibility with Japanese television.

US anime fans have been very lucky in that both the US and Japan use the same broadcast TV standard called NTSC. This has enabled us to view TV shows, movies, and Original Anime Videos on video tape and LaserDisc directly from Japan. Had the US and Japan had different broadcast systems like European countries do, our hobby could not exist here.

The Japanese have now developed the best HDTV system called MUSE, and it is a standard that will begin testing in Japan and Canada over the next year. It is a truly state of the art High Definition TV system featuring a wide screen with over 1125 lines of resolution! (over double the resolution of Super-VHS and Super-LaserDisc!!!).

But many in the US are opposed to Japan setting the standard saying that the Japanese would then gain an edge over US consumer electronic companies in producing and selling HDTV goods to US consumers! (Look at what whimpering losers we have become...we try to impede their progress rather than work to improve our own technology and markets.) Anyway, so now it is quite possible that the US would adopt some second-best system that would not be compatible with the new Japanese broadcast standard.

You can see what I'm getting at: Both countries video software would be rendered incompatible. US anime fans would not be able to view films from Japan. Think about it.

Now of course, all this may not come about...The US could adopt the Japanese system (not too likely, because of the costs...), or Japan might follow whatever system we choose in order to make it easier to

continue
to produce compatible consumer goods.

It will be pretty interesting to see what happens...and as an anime fan I will be watching nervously.
(TM)

MACROSS FLASH BACK 2012 ON LASERDISC (ORIGINAL ANIMATION VIDEO):

There is a lot of argument among anime fans as to how good this OAV is.
I would like to say that I love it because it serves its purpose rather well when you keep in mind that this video is meant to be a farewell video scrap-book of visuals and music from the Macross TV series and the Macross movie.

So, since it is a video-scrapbook of sorts, I'll list its contents. First off the OAV contains 13 of most popular songs from the show. This portion of the program really shines on laserdisc since the disc boasts a digital soundtrack. An of course, all but one of the songs are sung by Lynn Minmay, one of the main characters from the show.

Visually, this OAV contains clips from the TV show and movie. Perhaps the biggest failing of the program though, is the director's emphasis on the love triangle between characters Hikaru, Misa, and Minmay. Because of this many important moments of the show are missed...and the OAV has a too-sweet sentimental feeling to it.

Perhaps the most important (and most talked about) feature of this OAV is that it contains new animation footage at beginning and ends of the OAV. The beginning of the OAV starts with a fantastic Minmay concert that was supposedly planned for the end of the Macross Movie but was never used...and the end contains an intriguing sequence in which an older Lynn Minmay visits the concert stage years later and is magically greeted by her friends Hikaru and Misa. This end sequence also provides never before seen glimpses into the past...Minmay leaving home for Macross Island...and a possible future...A new space ship with Misa and Hikaru in command heading out to space once again. (The direction of the OAV leaves this portion of the ending tantalizingly vague...is Minmay getting on board the new ship...or is she daydreaming this as she visits the old concert stadium?) The art during these new sequences is amazing...it even surpasses that of the Macross movie...character designer Mikimoto is in top form here, and watching it makes one drool for a Macross sequel.

(No sequels are planned...).

The laserdisc version of this OAV is technically superb. It takes full advantage of all of the capabilities of the format. Like I said before,

I loved this, even though it dwells too much on the the Macross love triangle. I would recommend this to the die-hard Macross fan and/or the Haruhiko Mikimoto (HAL) art collector. The casual Macross fan , or someone who is not familiar with the show may find this a bit of a waste.

(TM)

GALL FORCE 2: DESTRUCTION (ORIGINAL ANIMATION VIDEO):

This is another fine product from the people at Sony Video Software International/MOVIC and AIC/Artmic/Animate Films. In my opinion, this sequel to GALL FORCE: ETERNAL STORY is not as good as the original but is still much better than a lot of OAVs coming out these days.

The story picks up 10 years after ETERNAL STORY. Both the Solenoids (the girls) and the Paranoids (the monsters) have been forced to use their planet destroyer weapons and both sides have lost their mother planets. They have each become wandering races with no place to return to.

The OAV opens with the destruction of the Paranoid mother planet (and a large portion of the Paranoid fleet). The Paranoid father leader discusses with his group of advisors how the planet destroyer managed to get through their defenses and destroy their mother planet. They decide to gather the remnants of the Paranoid fleet at the 9th Solar System (the only solar system left that hasn't been destroyed by the solar system destroyer weapons or isn't controlled by the Solenoids).

The Solenoids are also gathering their forces together. One Solenoid fleet passes through the remnants of an old Solenoid/Paranoid battle. They decide to salvage. They discover an old Blon-D type of droid warrior with a pilot still inside. It is Lufy (from ETERNAL STORY)! Her life functions have stopped but Shildy and Spea (the two in the salvage room) think that she can be brought back. They try once but the attempt fails. Shildy hesitates and decides to try once more. Meanwhile, the main

Solenoid fleet arrives. The Solenoid mother leader informs the combined fleet that the Paranoid mother planet has been essentially destroyed.

Unnoticed at first, Lufy's life functions return. Lufy begins the tedious process of recovering. However, because of her Attackers' training, she recovers quickly. During one such rehabilitation session, Lufy sees Catty (again from ETERNAL STORY)! Lufy is overjoyed at seeing again an old combat comrade but can't figure out what she's doing here. Shildy, Amy, and Spea are all surprised too that Lufy seems to know Catty.

Lufy suddenly remembers their mission on the StarReef -- to protect the planet Chaos from the Paranoids at all cost and asks about it. Shildy, recovering quickly, orders the room sealed and they begin to bring Lufy up to date.

As another Solenoid fleet arrives, Lufy is horrified by what she's just learned, about the race combination project. Shildy insists that it's their only remaining hope. However, there have been no complete successes. Spea says there's no other way. Lufy claims that all they have to do is to win the war. Shildy replies that there can be no victors in this war. Amy and Shildy inform Lufy then that both races have lost their mother planets. An announcement comes over the ship's system; the fleet is moving out to the 9th Solar System. Catty starts and says worriedly, "Not there....we can't not there".

Meanwhile, a remnant of a Paranoid fleet has picked up the gathering of the Solenoid fleet. The Paranoid fleet admiral decides to attack even though he has orders to gather at the 9th Solar System and the Solenoid fleet far outnumbers his. They attack and take the Solenoid fleet totally by surprise. Both sides have improved their jamming shields so they resort to in-close fighting rather than long-range bombing. Lufy also takes a fighter/bomber and joins the battle. She is saved by Shildy when she runs out of ammo and they both return to the ship for re-supply.

Lufy is in a good mood after sharpening her skills out there but her good mood is quickly crashed after realizing that most of her comrades-in-arms are cyborgs. After losing a majority of its ships, the Paranoid fleet retreats and heads onwards to the 9th Solar System. The Solenoid combined fleet also heads onwards to the 9th Solar System.

Lufy is having a hard time dealing with the changes that have occurred while she was away. (Notice the BGC poster on the wall? (grin)) She decides to head on down to the shooting range to talk to Shildy. The group gathers in a holotable room and Catty takes over the explanation.

She pulls up a picture of the solar system destroyer weapon and explains to Lufy that it has caused the destruction of over 12 solar systems.

Catty then pulls up a picture of a cyborg soldier and explains that over 80% of the soldiers are now cyborgs. They're basically bio-killing machines. She then explains that even though Lufy seems to know her, she doesn't know

Lufy. A picture appears: Solenoid Second Intelligence Section Officer C-9682138 Catty Nevilart. Catty then explains that she is an exact android copy of this officer. Catty's original mission was the race combination project. To assist her, a number of android copies were made

and spread throughout the Solenoid fleet. The Catty that Lufy knew on the

StarReef was another android clone. But now that both mother planets have

been destroyed and since all attempts at combining the two races have ended in failure, the race combination project was shelved and the remaining android copies have been left without a mission. However, Catty

claims, there was one partial success in the 9th Solar System.

Spea adds sorrowfully that since both fleets are heading there now, it will become a battlefield. Lufy reacts to this with anger. All they have

to do is to win that battle! Lufy begins to stalk out the room but Spea

blocks the way with a knife. Shildy reminds Lufy that this is information

that even the higher echelons don't know and tells her to think about what

she's learned here today.

Luffy is torn between conflicting emotions: what her new friends have told her and her former convictions. The Solenoid fleet enters the 9th Solar System and Terra and Chaos both come into view.

The Paranoid fleet also arrives and both sides prepare for battle. But while the supporting Solenoid fleets enter the battle, the main Solenoid fleet refuses to enter the melee! Catty and the others, thinking this strange, try to pull the reason out of the computer. Finally, after overriding many Top-Secret codes, Catty discovers that the 5th planet in the 9th Solar System is a camouflaged solar system destroyer! The plan is that Solenoid supporting fleets engage the Paranoid fleet and keep them busy while the Solenoid flagship activates the solar system destroyer (code named: Damia) and escapes outside of the solar system.

Damia then destroys the sun, the surround planets, and any Solenoid/Paranoid ships in the vicinity. Luffy is shocked to realize that they are willing to sacrifice their own fleets in this fashion in order to destroy the Paranoid fleet.

Shildy realizes that the Solenoid fleet is numerically inferior to the Paranoid fleet. Thus, the Solenoid mother leader's plan is to end everything here by wiping out the entire Paranoid fleet. Catty trembles... "We can't let them fire the solar system destroyer....everything will end!".

Shildy tries to find some weakness in Damia. Then, the announcement comes over the system for their fleet to move out and engage the enemy. Luffy stares open-mouthed at the screen and observes, "So we're....we're just pawns too"

The fleet moves forward and personnel hastily prepare for battle. Shildy decides that they'll go too....but to Damia to stop the firing of Damia somehow. Luffy remains. Shildy looks back at her for a little while and then goes too. In the attack ship, Spea asks about Luffy. Shildy murmurs, "We can't force her.....I had hoped that she'd understand. But who really knows what's best for the future? Let's go!" The attack

ship takes off and heads off towards Damia. Meanwhile, Lufy takes off in a droid warrior and heads toward the battle. "It's OK. I don't care if I'm just a pawn. If that's what strategy requires I'm satisfied!"

The attack ship enters lightspeed and speeds towards Damia. They arrive and Shildy takes over steering the ship. Shildy passes through the first group of shields but is detected by Damia at the second shield

level. Spea, Amy, and Catty leave in power suits. The ship is badly hit but Shildy blows off the lightspeed engines and saves the command module. The power suits maneuver into an exhaust duct and they meet up with Shildy who also comes out in a power suit. Catty pulls up a schematic of Damia and discovers that the power core would be impossible

to reach. They decide to hit the fire control processing center and split

into two to better reach it. Meanwhile, Lufy has been fighting the enemy.

"This is the kind of fighting I believe in..." she says as she watches the fleet fight against the backdrop of Terra. She then looks the other

way at Chaos and whispers, "...and this is the result of fighting."

Damia begins to power up. The group manages to reach the rendezvous point but the power suits are beyond help after fighting with Damia's automated defenses. They go on foot from here.

The main Solenoid fleet escapes out of the 9th Solar System. The main bore of Damia opens up and massive locks close all over Damia. They try

to blast through the locks but they just don't have the firepower.

The

group is trapped! Catty pulls out a grenade and approaches the lock.

Her

android body consists of microplasmalo. The explosion of her body will

easily destroy the lock. But Shildy talks her out of it, saying that even if she blows this lock, there are 5 more locks like it to get to the

processing center. Then, Lufy blows through the locks! "You guys still

here? I saw your suits back there and thought you'd croaked or something". With Lufy's droid warrior, they easily blast through the locks and destroy the fire control processing center.

Damia fires but because of the destruction of the processing center its aim is off and it narrowly misses the Sun. The Paranoids suddenly realize the true nature of Damia and warp out. Damia cannot fire

anymore

because of the loss of its processing center. In fact, it is close to destruction itself. Lufy, Shildy, Amy, Spea, and Catty barely get out in time.

They slowly come to. Catty looks out the window and wonders, "They're fighting....they're still fighting." Lufy says, "Let's go back."

Shildy

ends the OAV with the question, "Do you still believe that there can be a

victor in this war?" Chaos looms in space.....and Terra silently glides

out from behind it.

This OAV series has had some of the best animation around in OAVs. If you

haven't seen either of the GALL FORCE OAVs, I highly recommend that you

do so. The animation, character voices, plotline, and soundtracks to both

are excellent!

(MT)

URBAN SQUARE (ORIGINAL ANIMATION VIDEO):

I have very mixed feelings about this Original Anime Video. On one hand

it is a excellent work of anime technically. It boasts some really nice

animation, beautiful character designs, and a fantastic Jazz BGM soundtrack.

But on the other hand it features one of the dulllest and most predictable

detective stories that I have ever seen. It makes me wonder why they even

would choose to make this story since its been done in hundreds of films

and TV shows: Man Being Chased Bumps Into Innocent Bystander and Leaves

Bystander With "Important Item". Man Is Killed...Bad Guys Go After Innocent Bystander and New Girlfriend...etc, etc,...Rescue the Girl ...Car Chase...Gun Fight...Shoot Main Bad Guy a Few Times...THE END.

The kind of plot that's been ground out at least twice on every police TV show and dozens of movies.

I will say that some of the gun fight and chase scenes are well directed,

but like I said, technically this OAV is very well done. I just wish

it
held some surprises...or made some sort of attempt to bring a new
twist to
the detective/police story genre. I guess the folks who made this felt
that just animating a story like this would make it unique.

Just a couple of notes: I love the hit man called Henmi. Notice how
he can never seem to hit anyone with that machine gun of his since he
is always shooting at their feet! Also, I love the character design
of the hero...Ryo Matsumoto...He looks just like me if I were going to
be animated...I swear!

So, if you want to know what I look like...watch this! If you like to
amaze your friends by second-guessing the plot...watch this! But if
you
are looking for something stimulating and unique...well, go watch
Nausicaa again.
(TM)

PIONEER LD-838D LASERVISION LASERDISC PLAYER:

Let's put the facts up straight; I'm a newcomer to the LaserDisc
field
and this review is by no means meant to be an "expert's" view on it.
Rather, this is my impression of the player as it seems to me, a
neophyte. I have had this LaserDisc player now for 2 weeks and I am
very
impressed with it. This 8" and 12" LD player is well worth its price
(\$470 - \$570, depending on where you buy it). It has auto-loading and
auto-disc selection. The audio processing is done through two-times
over-sampling which results in crisp digital sound (from discs
equipped
with Digital Audio). Because of its LaserVision heritage, it
naturally
comes equipped with 400 lines of video resolution. The player itself
is
a trim 420 x 385 x 100 mm. It comes with a full-feature remote
control,
batteries for the remote, and various cables to hook up the player. A
plus is that this player is compatible with Pioneer's SR system so
that
if you ever decide to buy a Pioneer A/V receiver, you will be able to
control the player's basic functions using the receiver's remote
control.
The very few cons that I have been able to discover so far are: 1) the
disc drawer itself seems to be a bit loose and shaky when it is open.
This was a bit disconcerting. 2) This hasn't happened to me but I
have
heard horror stories from other people regarding what happened when
they

had something blocking the drawer while it was ejecting. I won't go into any gory details but the disc was damaged. EXTREME care should be taken not to block the drawer while it is ejecting (or loading for that matter). Overall, though, I believe that this player is one of the best-buys in the LaserVision player field. Besides, it has the high-quality Pioneer name on it. (grin)
(MT)

CIRCUIT ANGEL (ORIGINAL ANIMATION VIDEO):

Quite possibly one of the biggest wastes of the OAV concept ever made. And an example of the glut of quickly assembled OAVs beginning to clog the market in order to take advantage of the current boom in Original Anime Videos.

When you view an OAV you at least expect something somewhere between TV and feature film quality in terms of the animation. Also, you would expect a unique story...one that takes advantage of the freedom offered to artists in the OAV medium. You know, something like Vampire Hunter D, or Area 88, or even ICZER-1.

Well, CIRCUIT ANGEL is nowhere near those films in terms of animation quality or creative imagination. Watching this, you get the feeling that this was a failed TV pilot that someone figured they could throw out as an OAV to at least make some money off of it.

The story is dull and predictable: Motorcycle Girl goes against Rich and Rude Motorcycle Guy to prove that teamwork and friendship can win out over bucks. Big Race...Oooo, it looks like she's gonna loose!...Nope, she wins! Yeah...Boy, that rich snob sure got his...Sunset...The End. This type of story has been done a million times...I would suggest you watch the movie ROCKY instead...it's a better execution of the same story.

When the big shake out in the Original Anime Video market comes, productions like CIRCUIT ANGEL will be the ones weeded out. And then perhaps we could get back to Quality not Quantity in OAVs.

(Also note that the laserdisc version of this OAV is an exercise in wasted features. The OAV could have easily fit on a CAV disc with

digital
sound...but instead they use CLV format and waste a side of the disc
and
many of LaserDisc's special effects.)
(TM)

BUBBLE GUM CRISIS 2 : BORN TO KILL (ORIGINAL ANIME VIDEO):

Most folks who have seen this complain about this OAV's extremely
short
running time...about 27 minutes. Heck even the BGM CD for this OAV
is longer than the film! The CD runs 37 minutes!

But what people seem to fail to appreciate is that with this short
length
comes a fantastic economy of story telling, slick direction,
razor-sharp artwork, and dazzling scene choreography driven by this
OAV's fantastic pop/rock soundtrack. I guess it would be safer to say
that this OAV is more music video with a plot.

Once again the Knight Sabers go up against the GENOM Corporation and
Mason. Mason has recovered the USSD's satellite data from the body of
the
cyborg/girl Cynthia who was killed at the end of BGC 1. With it, he
hopes
to use the data in a new "Super-Boomer" design that will allow a
Boomer
robot to use the USSD's laser satellite as a defence weapon.

Without trying to give too much away, I would like to state that my
only
complaint about this OAV is the way that Mason gets away at the end:
He just drives away! Like he's driving home after a day at the office
or something. Really silly.

But don't write off seeing this OAV just because your friends tell you
its a rip-off because of the short length. The pacing of the story
direction in this short length is nothing short of brilliant and the
music and choreography of the battle scenes will have you hopping.
Not to mention those outrageous and deadly lady boomers...
And if that still doesn't convince you to see it...then the chance of
seeing Priss nude will...(Nudge, nudge...wink, wink...)

(PS: For us laserdisc users, once again Toshiba/EMI has come through
and put this second BGC episode on CAV format laserdisc with digital
sound. The picture and sound quality are amazing!)
(TM)

MAPS - LEGENDARY HEROES (ORIGINAL ANIMATION VIDEO):

By far the worst OAV I have ever seen...avoid at all costs. This even started me thinking that Circuit Angel wasn't all that bad! Whew! Another example of leap-on-the-bandwagon OAV production.
(TM)

THE DIRTY PAIR MOVIE : PROJECT EDEN (A.K.A.: PINK TYPHOON)

The Dirty Pair Movie, one of the most popular anime films from the Summer of '87, has just about every element you could ever want in an anime science fiction action comedy. Here's the list: a wild plot, cute girls, a dashing male lead, a mad scientist, a big red cat, ugly monsters, strange gadgets, wild weapons, great soundtrack music, great animation, and great action. Plus all the elements that made Dirty Pair such a cult hit are still here too! (Well, not everything...Nanmo is gone. I liked their robot Nanmo...What happened to Nanmo?!?)

In this adventure, the Dirty Pai...(receiving evil eye from Kei)...er...Lovely Angels are sent to a mining planet to investigate a series of attacks on some mining installations. The planet is a major source of ore for a substance called "visorium". And visorium is now the chief fuel for space craft.

As it turns out, a wacky scientist named Dr. Watsman has discovered that ore the visorium is refined from is the condensed and fossilized remains of an extinct race of humanoids called the Sadinga. Using samples of the ore, he is trying to reconstruct the race, but his experiments are not yet fully successful. All the ore does is turn into a deadly mutated creature with a strange attraction to visorium.

Since Watsman hates to see the remains of the Sadinga race exploited for fuel...he uses the mutated creatures to attack and gather more visorium ore for him at the factories. In the meantime he tries to perfect his experiments (his Project Eden) ...and he is getting closer to resurrecting the Sadinga race.

While all this is going on, a love interest for Kei is introduced in the form of a thief named Carson D. Carson. The girls have been after him since a ill-fated run-in with him at a visorium smuggling bust on a resort colony at the start of the movie.

He too has come to the planet looking for Dr. Watsman who has stolen a rare bottle of wine from him (The French wine is the last of 10 bottles issued to commemorate the 1945 liberation of France in World War 2...Not only is it worth millions of credits , it is also said that the person who possesses it will have good fortune...).

Of course things get even wilder from there so, I don't want to

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This CD keeps up the tradition of great BGC BGMs with an excellent selection of songs. The opening song, "MAD MACHINE", is an earcatcher with its driving beat. The instrumental, "Funky Doll", which plays in BGC 2 during Linna's aerobics class is also catchy and will have you snapping your fingers to it. Also, this CD starts off a policy of having one song that has the NightSabers as the singers. The song here sung by the NightSabers is called "Suriru ni Odoru Tenshi tachi" (roughly translated: "Angels Dancing For Thrills"). The harmonizations work

pretty well here. Besides its novelty value, the song itself is good.

I

wasn't particularly impressed with the theme song from this BGM, "Kizu Dareke no Wild" (roughly translated: "Badly Hurt Wild"). It seemed to emphasize too much the limits of Kinuko Oomori's (Priss' character voice

actress and singer) voice and you could definitely hear her voice slipping at times. The liner itself has an interesting selection of pictures (B&W, unfortunately!) of various BGC garage model kits such as

Priss riding her bike, Priss in concert, Cynthia, and the NightSabers in

combat gear. For fans of the BGC series, this is a great addition to your BGC collection. For people who aren't fans, this CD still contains

a fine compendium of pop music and may still be interesting. Check it out.

(MT)

SECOND OPINION!

I guess of the 3 BGC BGMS so far, I figure this must be my favorite since I just can't seem to get this one out of my CD player. A lot of high-tech percussion-heavy pop and rock instrumentals here...and Kinuko Oomori and the rest of the girls turn in some solid vocal performances on some great pop/rock songs. Favorite songs...the hard-pulsing beat and strained vocals of MAD MACHINE, the choral work SURIRU NO DORU TENSHI TACHI, and the sentimental sounding KIZU DAREKE NO

WILD. And perhaps I am a bit too addicted to the pounding-pop of the instrumental FUNKY DOLL (...sort of a BGC version of AXEL-F from Beverly Hills Cop...it sticks in your mind in much the same way). All in all, a great BGM performance and highly recommended for rock BGM fans.

(TM)

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS PART 3: BLOW UP COMPACT DISC

This is a hard BGM to get accustomed to. I don't say that meaning that

the music is bad or anything. On the contrary, the music in this BGM is

very good....I consider the music here to be superior to all the BGC BGMS

so far. The problem is that the music is much more complex here. It takes a lot of listening-to to get fully accustomed to the music. I like

practically all the songs on the BGM. "VICTORY" is a great theme song...

I like it very much now. Many of the instrumentals on this album have

various musical textures which lend very well to the enjoyment of the BGM. "DREAM" is an especially pretty instrumental ballad. The ending song, "Wasurenaide" (roughly translated: "Don't Forget"), is probably my favorite Priss song. The soulful guitar lead lines are great! The only song that I have problems with on this BGM is "Ashite e Touchdown" (roughly translated: "Touchdown to Tomorrow"). This song is the NightSabers' song on the BGM but the guitar line just sounds too much like a certain Asia (the band) song that I know for me to feel comfortable with. It's a great song but I wish they hadn't cheapened the album by borrowing lines like this without credit. Linna (Michie Tomizawa) sings the high line and Sylia (Ryoko Sakakibara) sings the low line with Priss (Kinuko Oomori) and Nene (Masako Hiramatsu) doing the melody in this song. Other than the copied guitar line, I have absolutely no complaint with the album. A definitely great set of music! There are no goodies this time for the BGC picture/illustration collector but I believe that the music more than makes up for it. (MT)

SECOND OPINION!

For some reason I didn't take to this album as quickly as I did the first two BGC BGM albums. Perhaps because there was no real quick fix pulsing pop on this album like in the first two volumes. But this may actually be the best album of the three in terms of the quality of the instrumental compositions. The intricate melodies and instrumentation take a few listenings to fully appreciate. And perhaps that is what makes this album so good: It is full of compositions that should be carefully listened to to be fully appreciated, while the first 2 BGC albums are straight forward flat out pop-rock that jump out and grab you. This album is more subtle...it sneaks up on you. So, put this album on after you are worn out from jumping around to the other two...this one needs relaxed concentration to enjoy. Recommended to the die-hard anime BGM fan because you will be hard pressed to find better written and arranged rock BGM. This is...should I say it?...New Age BGM! (TM)

DIRTY PAIR: THE MOVIE – ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK ON COMPACT DISC:

Of course, the LP for this BGM was reviewed in ANIME STUFF 5, but I would just like to add some thoughts on the CD version. The CD version of this

ICZER-ONE MEDIAMIX SPECIAL BOOK:

If you like Iczer-One, you will love this book...
...Even if you can't read Japanese.

The Mediamix book is, like the Iczer-One OAV, very graphic. It presents a sampling of art, from design sketches to new illustrations, which can stand on their own. The Japanese text quite probably gives tremendous insight into the animation, but the book can be followed through its graphic presentation quite easily. So easily that one can tend to overlook the great amount of English text contained. This text, often quite humorous (It's good to see that the Japanese seem to have equal problems with our language as we with theirs!), contains a wealth of information concerning the makers of the film, insights into the motives of the Cotewolf, and enough titles to keep you on track as you move through the book.

The Iczer-One Mediamix Special covers Iczer-One Acts I and II, presenting both production sketches and pictures from the OAV. Each character is studied, and the mecha are shown in detail. It is in these illustrations that the book has its great value. Caught frozen is the depth and range of Iczer-Ones' emotions.

Character development can be traced from rough sketch to finished animation. Within the book is a pictorial summary of Acts I and II, and the book ends with a series of test renderings of all the major characters, their machines, and their creepy friends. Scattered throughout the book are some very special gems: Sepia in a swimsuit; Iczer-One, Iczer-Two and Nagisa as A-ko, B-ko, and C-ko; and many small sketches just for fun. And last, Original Iczer Space: a series of illustrations by director/character designer Toshihiro Hirano. These alone are worth the price of the book.

The Mediamix special is the perfect supplement to the Iczer-One anime series. Both can be viewed alone, but together they enhance one another.

If you are a follower of either Toshihiro Hirano or Iczer-One, you should not be disappointed with this book.
(M&J)

PROJECT A-KO BEST COLLECTION BOOK:

For the Project A-Ko fan there is no better book on Project A-Ko Part 1 than this one. This large format paperback book has so much to offer! For starters, it features a complete plot summary of the Part 1 story with Japanese text and _tons_ of full color photos from just about every scene in the Original Anime Film. Also featured are sections of character and mecha designs, animation pencil test illustrations (the pre-cell drawings...), and profiles of the major characters. As an extra bonus the left-hand margin of the book contains three groups of cell animation that you can make move by flipping the pages of the book! Neat! So, if you are thinking of getting just one book on Project A-Ko for your collection, consider the BEST COLLECTION book! It has a little of everything.
(TM)

CREAM LEMON MEMORY BOOK:

From the way that this book is numbered, I would assume that there are a whole series of books covering the episodes of this erotic OAV series. Anyway, this book is a collection of stills and art from the first two episodes in the CREAM LEMON series – PART 1: BE MY BABY, and PART 2: ESCALATION.

This is large format art book stuff, so it is a pretty good item for the collector. It features some really neat original pen and marker artwork of some of the characters. Some character profiles done in the manner of a Playboy Playmate data sheet, filled out by the characters themselves. (grin) Some examples of the character designs from the show, and preview stills from Cream Lemon parts 3 & 4 (A nice section on PART 4: POP CHASER, by the way).

The only disappointing feature of the book is that most of the stills of cells shown are in black and white. Sorta cheap for a deluxe art book of this size and price.
(TM)

B-CLUB SPECIAL: ARTMIC DESIGN WORKS MOOK

For any fan of AIC/Artmic, this book is highly recommended!! For those of us who don't know who AIC/Artmic is, they are the animation company responsible for bringing us Technopolice 21C, the Megazone 23 series,

Genesis Climber Mospeada, the Iczer One series, the Bubble Gum Crisis series, the Gall Force series, etc. The list is much too long to mention completely. It opens up with a poster illustrated by Kenichi Sonoda of various AIC characters. From there on, the mook is separated into 5 sections: 1) Animation, 2) SFX Design, 3) Toy & Hobby, 4) Illustration and 5) Another Works. The Animation section contains basically the above list of shows and OAVs. For each one, there are 4 color pages containing pictures from the actual anime plus mecha cutaways and color character and mecha sketches (one of the most interesting color sections is the section showing the various coloring tests for the KnightSabers' hardsuits!) On top of that, there are 8-12 B&W pages with character and mecha sketches from the anime, showing closeups and scribbled designer notes. At the end of the Animation section, there is a short subsection detailing Artmic's upcoming anime for 1987 and 1988 (such as Dragon's Heaven, Katteni Shirokuma, Metal Skin Panic Madox-01, BGC 2,3 and Gall Force 2) In the SFX Design section, ARTMIC describes its involvement in project as diverse as Photon to Sony Pasocon (Personal Computer) ads (using Gall Force characters!). In the Toy & Hobby section, there are descriptions of various other things that ARTMIC is involved in. The Gall Force video game for the Nintendo (Japan only, sorry!) game computer is shown. The Mospeada toys as well as other toys that ARTMIC has designed are also shown. The best part of this section however is the two-page spread on ARTMIC's garage kits. They show garage kits from Gall Force, MZ 23, Mospeada, and Bubble Gum Crisis in color! The Illustration section is possibly the most gorgeous part of the mook. Beautiful art is featured for 16 color pages with posters and image boards from Macross to Bubble Gum Crisis! This section really gives you an opportunity to appreciate ARTMIC/AIC's works of art. In the Another Works section, ARTMIC shows the various logos for the anime they create and for some, they show rejected logos. It's interesting to see the various permutations the Iczer One logo went through before its final appearance! (grin) Finally, the last section is called the Staff Room and contains pictures and biographies from ARTMIC's staff. Plus, there is a rough layout on what the ARTMIC studio looks like and the typical

ARTMIC daily schedule. In the end, there are messages from various people in the industry to ARTMIC. One last bonus: the right hand corner of each page (front and back) has a small box with an anime scene in it.

When these corners are paged through, they make up a semi-animated scene!

The front corners are Gall Force; the back corners are Megazone 23 Part

II. In short, this mook is a definite must-have for the anime fan!!
Obtain it in any way possible!

(MT)

////////////////////ANIME NEWS FLASH\\

BUBBLE GUM CRISIS CONTINUES...

Here is an important bit of news that was sent to me via E-mail from Aki

Umemoto who is in Japan working with ARTMIC/AIC on the Captain Power videos. ARTMIC/AIC are the folks who create Bubble Gum Crisis.

Date: 12-Jan-88 06:27 EST

From: AKI [76661,2211]

Subj: BGC4&5 LIVES!

Tom, I have a correction to make on my last communique. BGC4 is scheduled

to come out in July and BGC5 to come out in December of '88, not Feb and

July. Also, Artmic has committed to produce 13 BGC tapes! Yes, count them, 13! Take care, that's all for now.

Another interesting bit of news about Bubble Gum Crisis: It seems that the character Priss may die in BGC 4. Apparently Kinuko Oomori, who does

her voice and singing is, leaving to pursue her singing career. So far there has been no definite news from Artmic/AIC on this...but BGC 4 could turn into quite a shocker for some of loyal BGC fans.

(FLASH!: Well, the latest news is that Priss is back! I guess they found

an offer for Oomori-san that she couldn't refuse! (grin)

THE MEGAZONE 23 SAGA TO CONTINUE!

23

12-15 months before it's release.

(TM)

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ORGUSS STUFF LISTED:

the

- anime

(TM)

THE EARLY HISTORY OF NAUSICAA IN THE VALLEY OF THE WIND:

supposed

01-Mar-88 05:46:32

NAUSICAA to refresh my memory. According to this article...

--

In the August '81 issue, ANIMAGE ran a 32-page "The World of Hayao Miyazaki" feature. Turns out Miyazaki had a pile of illustrations, some of them movie proposals.

"I'd like to make movies like these," he told the ANIMAGE staff.

As Miyazaki enthusiastically told his proposals to the staff beginning with then-editor-in-chief Ogata, they became convinced they wanted to do something about it.

So in July of that year, ANIMAGE took a proposal for an animation movie to the conference of the Tokuma conglomerates. Titled "Sengoku Majo," some of the Miyazaki mecha it would feature was a giant demon-castle floating in the sky...

But, the conference rejected the proposal.

Immediately, Miyazaki struck back with a second proposal. "Rolf," it would feature Yara the Queen of the Valley of the Wind and gigantic Sand Worms.

It was also rejected.

Maybe the proposal would go through if it was based on existing material, they thought. So, they negotiated with Miyazaki if he'd draw an original comics for Animage. He gave them three conditions to accept their offer...

1. He'll terminate serialization as soon as he finds an animation project to work on.
2. If it doesn't gain popularity, the editorial staff may terminate the serialization any time. In return, he'll draw whatever he wants (ie, Animage has no creative say?).
3. He won't draw it as an original story to base animation on, ie, unlike conventional Japanese comics, he'll draw it intentionally hard to animate.

Thus, NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF THE WIND started its run in ANIMAGE

Then came December 20 of the same year. ANIMAGE had just received the first installment of NAUSICAA from Miyazaki and had just finished

laying
out the rest of the magazine. Miyazaki called them. "I want to
terminate the serialization."

Turns out he started working on FAMOUS DETECTIVE HOLMES since the
beginning of November. We know Miyazaki; he puts tons of effort to
ensure the high quality of whatever project he works on. As a result,
he'd leave home for work (HOLMES) by 10am at the latest and return
home
at 11pm. Then, he'd draw the comics (NAUSICAA) until 5am. He slept
for
an average of 3 hours per day. No wonder he wanted to quit...

--

They could make an entire movie out of "the Making of NAUSICAA"
<girn>.

Well, some of the imageboards reprinted in the beginning of ART OF
NAUSICAA are from "Sengoku Majo" and "Rolf" BTW. The one on P5 is
probably from "Majo"...the dead robot looks like a guardian of the
"floating demon-castle in the air." PP8-9 looks like a NAUSICAA
imageboard. PP10-11 is obviously "Rolf"...The bottom of the right
page

shows Princess Yara with Teto, her pet...dog? P12 has what...Yara and
"Teto" riding the Mowe together?...Gee, the Mowe really looks like a
gull

at this point. P14...who's that girl "Teto" is with?

P15..."Teto"(?) again. P16-17...Could it be from "Majo"?...Doesn't
really look like Yara riding a...flying dinosaur mecha? P18..."Rolf"?
...Is that "Teto" carrying the machine gun?...the orange/brown clothe
makes me think the girl in the portrait is Yara.

P19..."Majo"?...those
robots must be descending from the demon-castle.

Beautiful book, THE ART OF NAUSICAA. I haven't opened it for quite a
while. (Silly Tom, they didn't have CDV back when they planned the
5-minute pilot, and I don't know what Jo Hisaishi was doing back then
either. <girn>)

MAILORDER UPDATE : FOLLOW UP TO ANIME STUFF 4: 3/1/1988

Quite a lot has happened in the world of mail-order anime importing
since ANIME STUFF issue 4. The two major players, Books Nippan and
Wyvern Web Graphics are going through quite a lot of changes right
now.

And it would seem that 1988 will be a make or break year for them
both.

BOOKS NIPPAN: For now, not recommended for video imports, special
orders or magazine subscriptions. Order in-stock items only.

WYVERN WEB GRAPHICS: WWG is in a state of major transition and possible growth. WWG's founder Vaunda Perry is now living and working in Japan, and she has left her business in the hands of the of her helpers at WWG. Now the big question is, how will the new WWG perform? If Vaunda is able to get access to more goods in Japan with her affiliation with ANIMATE, and if WWG is able to maintain their excellent customer service, WWG should do well indeed.

I really hope that WWG can perform as well as they have over the past year. They have offered amazing quality in their mail-order services and fantastic access to anime goods. If Vaunda and WWG are able to take advantage of her working in Japan and being so close to ANIMATE, they should have an unparalleled access to goods. (And probably faster translation and shipping of orders too!)

By the way, WWG is now selling Magazine subscriptions to all the major anime mags. Subscriptions will start within about a month...they were really fast getting mine started. It only took 4 weeks! (let's see Books Nippan top that!)

And don't forget...WWG now has a new address and phone number:

WYVERN WEB GRAPHICS
P.O. BOX 5748
TITUSVILLE, FL 32783-5748

PHONE: 1-(305) 268-8095
(TM)

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////////////////////////////////FAN CLUBS\\
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AMERICAN ALLIANCE FOR JAPANESE ANIMATION (AAJA):

This new anime club for knowledgeable anime fans is highly recommended.

Based in Gardena, California, this group holds public screenings and meetings at the Japanese Cultural Institute. Also, as promised, they have stepped up the quality of their newsletter for us out-of-state fans.

The AAJA newsletter is an excellent publication featuring news and reviews of some of the latest anime. The club also has some interesting ties into the anime industry because of their connections with Books Nippan. In all, this is a neat club featuring quality info and presentations for their members...and all without the politics that some of the CF/O's indulge in.

(TM)

For more information about AAJA, contact:

AAJA
C/O
ROBERT NAPTON
1236 EUCLID STREET #201
SANTA MONICA, CA 90404

THE MACROSS FAN CLUB:

Can anyone provide us with information on what has happened to THE MACROSS FAN CLUB (P.O. BOX 2566, COSTA MESA, CA 92628-2566). It seems all communication from them has stopped and no information as to what has happened has been available. They have also not been responding to some of my last correspondence. Any information would be greatly appreciated. I miss their excellent newsletter.

(TM)

3/1/1988

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on CompuServe chatting about this amazing hobby for almost 3(!) years
now. And special thanks to Masa for becoming my partner in ANIME
STUFF.

Two sets of fingers on the keys are better than one!